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DHHS Statement on FNS Letter Timely SNAP Processing

Carson City, NV – The Nevada Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) shares the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) concern that applications for food assistance benefits for eligible low-income Nevadans are processed timely.

Since 2009, the number of Nevadans served by the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), has increased from approximately 175,000 recipients to more than 390,000 today. Most recently the combined effects of unprecedented Medicaid and SNAP caseload growth have placed enormous challenges on the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) field service offices. Nevada's processing times have improved over the last year to more than 88 percent timely approval. Today there are less than 750 pending applications over 30 days and DWSS is moving quickly to resolve each and every case.

Recognizing there is still more work to do, DWSS has been in continuous communication with FNS to discuss and develop strategies for improvement. DWSS has implemented several case management processing enhancements supporting recent and anticipated improvements designed to meet and exceed the target of 95 percent timely approval.

With dramatic case load growth over the last several years including the severe economic recession, DWSS has developed and responded with many enhancements including electronic applications, same day determinations in many cases, improved lobby management and multiple other process improvements.

State of Nevada has developed a comprehensive corrective action plan which has been shared in draft form with FNS and will be formally provided as the corrective action plan in early October. “We are confident based on conversations between DWSS leadership and the FNS Regional Office the corrective action plan will provide adequate evidence of compliance within the required timeframe,” said Steve Fisher, DWSS Administrator.

“We appreciate the continued assistance that FNS has provided in development of the program initiatives and corrective action plan,” said Romaine Gilliland, DHHS Director. “DWSS has been working closely with FNS to discuss and develop strategies to improve timeliness. Many of the new processes are already gaining traction.”

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